

The LAY-MONK.

*Qui semel Verecundiae limites transierit, eum bene et
naviter oportet esse impudentem. Tull.*

MONDAY, November 23. 1713.

I SHALL make no other Introduction to the following Moral Essay, than to inform the Reader, That it is written by Sir *Eustace Locker*, the Founder of our Society.

'Tis the Province of true Judgment, to discern the dissimilitude and different Natures of Things, that having a near Agreement and Resemblance to each other, are apt to impose upon undistinguishing and weak-sighted Men, and appear to them the same: Parsimony and Avarice are endow'd with a Complexion and Features so like to those of Frugality, and Luxury and Profusion carry such a lively Appearance of Magnificence and Generosity; and in short, every Vertue lying in the midst, between two Extrems, has so much in common with each, that to the less discerning, 'tis difficult to abstract and separate their Ideas; a thousand Times we mistake one for the other, and bestow that Applause upon pretended Vertue, which is only due to the genuine and real.

Impudence is so nearly ally'd to Fortitude and a Praise-worthy Assurance, that it often passes upon the Vulgar, for those laudable Qualifications. The heroick Boldness and Constancy, that in a great Man result from the Consciousness of his Merit and Integrity, is often so well counterfeited by a daring Criminal, who by the most unwarrantable Means carries on the blackest Designs, that the Difference is not easily discover'd. Since a generous Fire and a dauntless Resolution, usually accompany the Actions of brave and elevated Spirits, engag'd in the Pursuit of some honourable End, where-ever Spectators see the like Ardor and Firmness, they are ready to conclude, it must arise from the same Principle, and is employ'd for the like worthy Purposes; and for this Reason, Impudence is so often prevalent and successful, without any solid Merit to support it. When it appears at the Bar, it hangs eternally on a Cause, and never knowing when 'tis answer'd, with a

Torrent of Words and false Eloquence, bears down all Learning, Law and Sense: Among the Professors of Physick, it supplies the Want of Judgment, Experience and Industry. *Pontæus*, the famous Charletan, used to declare, That of all the various Countries, thro' which he had travell'd, he found the greatest Stock of Credulity in *England*: We have Numbers of People among us who cannot imagine, that any Man should confidently assume to himself the Power of Life and Death, and at the same Time be very ignorant and illiterate; and tho' they see perpetual Instances of his Incapacity, and are deceiv'd every Day by his vain and ineffectual Promises, they will still believe, and still be deceiv'd.

Impudence emboldens a Man to undertake any Task, tho' ever so unequal to his Abilities, and carries him thro' it with Spirit and Alacrity; it enlivens his Hopes, diminishes the Difficulties that obstruct, and magnifies the Means in his Hands, that promote his Designs: This single Qualification will fit a Man, in his own Opinion, for any Post of Trust or Business. It will make him a Politician, without Sagacity or the Knowledge of humane Nature; 'twill inspire him with Geography, and teach him the Situation of Cities and Countries, tho' he never before had seen a Map: A Man adorn'd with this Vertue, is qualify'd indifferently to be a Colonel of Horse, a Flag-Officer, or a Judge. In Conversation he has great Advantages, where he claims an Insight into the Depths of Philosophy, is acquainted with the Secrets and Springs of Government, arrogates a refin'd Taste in Wit and Criticism, and puts all Learning and good Sense out of Countenance.

This unblushing Quality, is likewise the most effectual Means to procure Power, Wealth and Honour: 'Tis craving, insinuating, importunate, and receives no denial: It supplies the Place of Merit of all Kinds, and *no Vertue is wanting, if Impudence is present*: 'Tis the shortest Way to be excellent in Science or Business; and one would think

(Price Three Half Pence.)

think that the present Age had generally found out the Secret; and had therefore, in the Views of Profit, apply'd themselves more to the Improvement of their Foreheads, than to the Cultivating of their Understandings.

A frontless Man, is never to be disturb'd in his Opinion of his own Worth and Capacity; is hard and insensible to Reproaches, and entirely regardless of his Character; he's unconcern'd at his prostituted Honour, and mindless of every Thing, but his main Point in View, which he pursues by Means of any Denomination: In Company, he inveighs against those pretended Crimes in others, which are really his own; Falshood and Impudence are the Faults he charges upon his Enemies with the utmost Expression of Detestation, that weak People, on whose Credulity he relies as his principal Support, may be induc'd to believe, that he can never be guilty of any Offence of which he shews so great an Abhorrence.

This inflexible Assurance, of so much value and extensive Usefulness, which not only covers, but cures the Defects of Mankind, and adorns them with every Excellence, is not, however, of such easy Acquisition, as some People may imagine.

To form an impudent Man, of the first Class, must conspire as well extraordinary native Genius, and a Mind well-turn'd for this Perfection, as great Industry and unwearied Application. Some indeed have that Felicity of Complexion, that being easy to be instructed, they come forward apace, and make astonishing Improvements in a little Time. But the greatest Part of Men must take Pains, and undergo with Patience repeated Practice, before they can attain this Qualification in an eminent Degree, and subdue the last Efforts of expiring Bashfulness: Before they become fix'd and obdurate, they will often feel great Strife and Contention within; and, perhaps, in some unguarded Hour, seduc'd by the Charms and Allurements of Modesty, they will yeild to the sudden Temptation, be surpriz'd with a Blush, and relapse into a Fit of Shame. The Case of these Men is like that of young Women, who are yet Novices in Vice; they must go thro' a Course of Iniquity, that they may at length subdue all Diffidence, and get a compleat Conquest over all Remorse.

And some of these, after long Endeavours to fix and determine their fluctuating Temper, will, perhaps, still find themselves disappointed, and acknowledge they are unable to extinguish all Remains of Bashfulness.

In the other Extream there are several Kinds of false Modesty; one of which I shall mention, that has not, I think, been taken notice of in Writing.

It is no genuine Modesty, for any Man to have a far worse Opinion of his Understanding, Wit and Vertue, than they really deserve; this would be Ingratitude to our great Benefactor, Injustice to our selves, and Falshood in our Conceptions. Since Truth is a Conformity in our Idea's, to the Objects they represent, we ought always to have

a just Perception of our own good Qualities. To set too high a Value on our Merit, or entertain an injurious Opinion of our selves, is equally Erroneous; since by one, and the other, we equally deviate from the Rule of Judging Right. Should a beautiful Woman (which 'tis hop'd may never happen) believe her self Deform'd, or an accomplish'd Gentleman think himself a Clown; or should a Man of Learning, Sense and Wit, think contemptibly of his Endowments, this would be a culpable Diminution of their Merit: Nor would it only imply a false Conception, but 'tis a very hurtful Error. This false Modesty restrains a Man from attempting and pursuing generous Designs: From a faulty Diffidence and Distrust of his Talents and Abilities, he forbears to employ them; and thus his Judgment, good Sense, and Capacity for Business, are in a great Measure useless to the World.

I lament the ill Effects of this false Modesty no where more than in the Senate. Florio has all the Qualities requir'd in a great Man. His Head is clear, his Apprehension quick, and his Judgment solid. No Senator has a deeper Insight into publick Affairs, or a truer Zeal for the Good of his Country. He has, besides this, by his great Probity and Decency, and his fine Accomplishments, obtain'd the Good-will of opposite Parties. He is a distinguish'd Master of Polite Learning, and an excellent Writer; and is defective in nothing to make him shine as an Orator, but sufficient Assurance. For want of this, his admirable Faculties, which his Modesty will not suffer him to exert in Speaking, are in this Place almost lost. Would he apply himself, by degrees, to cure his Diffidence, What eminent Services might he do his Country, and what Glory would redound to himself? The Honour that Cicero gain'd, in asserting the Rights and Liberties of the Romans, by his Eloquence in the Senate, was not inferior to that of their Heroes, who defended their Nation in the Field.

N. B. There is lately arriv'd from Germany, a famous Chymist; who, in his unsuccessful Pursuit of the Philosopher's Stone, after many Years, has found out a Liquor of no less Importance, than the yet undiscover'd ALKAHEST; he calls it his CORINTHIAN TINCTURE: Its Vertue is to take off all soft and tender Infirmities of the Forehead, and to preserve the Cheeks from Red'ning upon any Surprise: Taken inwardly to twenty Drops, twice a Day, it gives sudden Ease to any secret Pains in the Breast, imparts Boldness and Resolution to go thro' any Difficulty and Danger, and effectually kills the Worm in the Heart. His Price is Moderate. The Doctor lodges at the BRASEN-HEAD in the Minorities.

This Paper will come out every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and may be had at Mr. Harrison's by the Royal Exchange; Mrs. Dodd's and Mrs. Boulter's without Temple-Bar; and Mrs. Bond's at Charing Cross.

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